

Summary of Meeting
CALFED Bay-Delta Program Levee and Channel Technical Team
May 11, 1998

Key Discussion Items:

- The inclusion of the levees in the Suisun Marsh area into the CALFED process was discussed.
- Permit coordination issues were discussed.
- Monitoring process issues were discussed by the group.
- Input was sought from the group for the Special Projects program.
- An update was given on the subsidence sub-team meeting that was held on 4-28-98.
- Emergency Response topics were discussed.

Action Items:

- There was no closure on whether or not to include the levees in the Suisun Marsh area in the base level of CALFED funding for levee upgrades although the sentiment was for no inclusion. It was noted it could be very expensive if those levees were brought into the process. There was concern that monies earmarked for delta levee improvements could instead be funneled into the marsh area if inclusion occurs. In addition, the current levee budget would probably have to be adjusted upwards 30 percent to begin addressing those areas. Also, some agencies are leaning towards allowing those areas to revert to tidal wetlands. It was concluded that an official position on inclusion or no inclusion needs to be taken by an agency such as CALFED before the issue can be brought to closure.
- Permit coordination issues should be directed to Frank Wernette and Pat Brantley from Fish and Game who are chairing this effort. There was discussion on forming a sub-team to avoid this agency back-and-forth submittal process but it was noted the sub-team members could go back-and-forth themselves if they were not empowered to make a decision.
- The CMARP monitoring process was presented to the group by USGS representative Larry Smith. The process is new and will supply a number of monitoring needs for several study efforts.
- Suggestions on the future direction of the Special Projects program should be directed to Michael Ramsbotham and then brought to the technical team for further discussion.
- The subsidence sub-team met on April 28, 1998 and an update was given on the results of that meeting. There will be a separate report that will be published as an appendix to the August CALFED levee report. Differences between levee and interior island subsidence were discussed. There was discussion on the "zone of influence" as it applies to the band width from the levee crown for subsidence concerns.
- A WREM report being prepared by DWR will look at emergency response issues. Also, an Assembly Bill being put up for vote will radically change and improve funding for Delta emergency response. The bill is being modeled after the funding process for CDF forestry.
- The next meeting of the CALFED Levee and Channel Technical Team will be on June 18, 1998 from 9-12 in room 1142 of the Resources Building.

Draft Meeting Notes
CALFED Bay-Delta Program Levee and Channel Technical Team
May 11, 1998 at 1:00 pm in room 1142 of the Resources Building

Attendance List:

Margit Aramburu, Delta Protection Commission
Bill Betchart, private consultant
Rob Cooke, CALFED (chair)
Steve Deverel, private consultant
Mike Hardesty, Reclamation District 2068
Walt Hoppe, local resident
Chuck Howard, US Bureau of Reclamation
Bob Johnston, Dutra Materials
Kenneth King, private consultant
Gwen Knittweis, CALFED
Gil Labrie, DCC Engineering
Ulrich Luscher, Woodward Clyde Inc
Chris Neudeck, Kjeldsen Sinnock and Neudeck Inc
Michael Norris, DWR Central District (minutes)
Lynn O'Leary, Corps of Engineers / CALFED
Michael Ramsbotham, Corps of Engineers / CALFED
Curt Schmutte, DWR Central District
Larry Smith, US Geological Survey
Jim Sung, DWR
Gary Tilkian, Metropolitan Water District Southern California
Frank Wernette, Fish and Game
John Winther, Delta Wetlands
Tom Zuckerman, Central Delta Water Agency

Rob Cooke convened the meeting. The meeting minutes from 4-8-98 CALFED Levee and Channel meeting were reviewed and approved by the group with no comments.

The group discussed whether the levees in the Suisun Marsh area should be included in the program. It was noted that these levees were previously excluded from the base level of protection although Assembly Bill 360 provides for 12 miles of inclusion. Rob and Chris felt we shouldn't change things too much from the present position of not including those levees. Curt Schmutte noted that huge sums of monies could be spent on these levees and felt we should wait until we have better direction on how the marsh fits into the overall scheme of things before going for inclusion or no inclusion. Curt noted the 1998 floods were a good example where agencies were reluctant to step forward with monies when those levees failed. Curt thought the budget would probably have to adjusted upwards about 30

percent to include those levees. Tom Zuckerman felt CALFED should make an opinion first before we look for a funding mechanism for those levees. Curt noted the levee areas are forming a Reclamation District so that they can apply for monies under the Special Projects program.

Margit noted there was a plan put together for those areas in the past and it included levee guidelines. However, Margit felt that the emphasis of the levee program is to protect water quality and, if the marsh areas can be justified from that perspective, then they can go to the Legislature and ask for funding for that reason. If the reason is other than water quality (such as wildlife enhancement), then we need to look for another funding mechanism. Curt noted that some agencies have stated that they don't want to see those levees upgraded and would prefer to see some of those areas revert to tidal.

John Winther noted that in-Delta levee protection is different than Suisun Marsh levee protection. Curt noted that unless an official position is taken by someone (such as CALFED), then monies that would have gone to habitat would instead be funneled into the marsh. Ulrich Luscher asked if the "problem" and "solution" areas as defined by CALFED include the marsh and Rob noted it did. John Winther felt the remaining 13 months of DWR levee funding could be jeopardized by trying to include the marsh areas in the process. Rob and Margit noted that certain areas of the marsh are designated to revert to tidal wetlands in the ERPP and that could be the "opinion" Curt is looking for. Rob noted the CALFED Management Team is directing that they don't want to see significant changes from what's already there but Chris noted the area really hasn't had a chance to latch on to funds although we could see it in the next funding cycle. Frank Wernette noted it is the DFG opinion that the marsh should only go tidal on purpose (ie from willing sellers) and those are the areas we should be looking at. Margit noted the area is unique because there are no cities and no utilities. Gwen Knittweis asked if studies have addressed whether or not there would be any water quality export impacts from marsh levee failures. Curt thought there could be impacts because the flooded area would be right up against the distribution facilities (ie Roaring River). Rob closed by saying we need some input from the Policy Group asking to what extent the marsh should be included in the levee program.

The next topic dealt with permit coordination and Gwen Knittweis referred to a handout. Gwen noted hotter issues such as work windows, general permits from the RWQCB, and lack of agency staffing. Gwen said to send comments to Frank Wernette and Pat Brantley. Tom Zuckerman felt there should be a coordinated committee process rather than this back-and-forth between agencies. Margit said the committee members would have to have the authority to make a decision at the meeting so that they wouldn't have to go back-and-forth themselves. There was discussion of the "120-day work window" and how it creates problems with getting work done when the time frame elapses. John Winther and Frank Wernette felt the work window discussion could fit into the permit streamlining process. Tom felt there was something wrong with the way the issue is being addressed (by actions to protect Delta smelt for example) and at some point the rules need to be adjusted just a bit.

Gwen noted the ongoing work with the RWQCB on dredging issues as well as a Category III grant proposal on sediment reuse and disposal alternatives. Gwen also discussed an outreach letter that was

sent to the Reclamation Districts asking for their input on shallow water habitat. John Winther was noted as one of two districts (the other was Fay Tract) that has responded so far to the letter.

The last topics relating to permit coordination dealt with Delta GIS and dredging issues. In response to a proposal by Natural Heritage Institute that Tom and Margit were discussing, Curt noted there are dedicated staff and machines for the Delta GIS system. Walt Hoppe noted that raising levees to PL84-99 standard affects flooding in his area and he wonders who will look at the issue of raising levees without dredging. Rob said that resources are being put into getting permits but no dredging work will get done without getting permits first.

The next topic dealt with the status report on funding and Gwen Knittweis said the funding issue is under formation and referred to a handout. The handout doesn't necessarily reflect full achievement of PL84-99 standard although it is being worked on and could be ready by August. Gwen said levee funding could be addressed in the budget and we could know more in the near future. There was discussion of when the program would start with "year one" and Rob said everyone was hoping it could be 1999 or 2000 but we couldn't say for sure right now.

Bill Betchart said the funding scenario needs to be further broken down by specific tasks such as emergency response and the documents dealing with the funding issue need to be more "robust". Chris said the \$60 million in improvements that have occurred since 1986 made a difference in the disasters of 1997 and 1998 and 14 islands would have probably failed in 1997 if those improvements had not been done. Chris and Curt briefly discussed funding problems in the subventions program.

Larry Smith began the next discussion dealing with the Comprehensive Monitoring Assessment Research Program (CMARP). Larry said we need a monitoring program because it provides information for implementation, assurance to stakeholders, and it satisfies Congress. Examples of the scope of CMARP include the CALFED Common Program, the OPS program, IEP Vernalis, CAMP, and SFEI needs. CMARP stages include a design proposal (which is already done), a design monitoring and research stage, a program for CALFED (which should take about 9 months to complete), and an implementation and refining stage. The CMARP Stage 2 costs are estimated at \$1.8 million. Stage 2 products include a white paper, a metadata system, a Category III monitoring process, an RFP process, and an interim report for the EIR by August of 98. Larry is looking for input on forming a sub-team.

The Phase I CMARP report can be viewed on the web site address "www iep.water.ca.gov". Larry discussed the map for the horizontal and vertical control network to be measured by GPS. The map is being reviewed for quality control and will be released to the public soon. Chris noted the NAVD 1988 is a new datum for the Delta and he wondered how fast everyone would adapt to it. The new information is showing that some islands are 1/2 foot off and even lower than what was previously thought.

Michael Ramsbotham discussed the topic dealing with DWR Special Projects. Michael requested feedback on special projects from the team. Tom Zuckerman wondered whether the Special Projects issue should become part of the CALFED program. It was noted that, although not part of the program at this time, it could become part of the program at year one.

The subsidence topic was covered by Lynn O'Leary. There was a meeting of the subsidence sub-team on 4-28-98. Lynn said there will be a subsidence report that will be published as an appendix to the August CALFED levee report. Lynn said the subsidence of levees from consolidation is different from the subsidence of the interior of islands from oxidation. The definition of peat was discussed during the sub-team meeting. The "zone of influence" or the band width from the levee crown as it applies to subsidence was discussed during the sub-team meeting. Also, seepage concerns will be addressed. The next meeting of the subsidence sub-team will be held on 5-20-98.

The emergency response topic was covered by Lynn O'Leary. According to Lynn, work on this topic has just begun. Lynn referred to a Water Resources Engineering Memorandum (WREM) that is being prepared by DWR Central District that will address some aspects of emergency response. Lynn noted that there is sentiment to not form a sub-team for this topic but to rather bring the discussion matters to the technical team for review. Chris discussed an Assembly Bill authored by Machado that will provide disaster response emergency funding for the Delta and is modeled after the CDF forestry process. There wasn't closure on whether or not Lynn should form a sub-team for this topic.

The seismic risk assessment schedule has slipped. However, Lynn said it is expected to get back on schedule soon and a final product should be produced.

Rob scheduled the next meeting of the CALFED Levee and Channel Technical Team for Thursday June 18, 1998 from 9-12 in room 1142.

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